



Influenza Surveillance Weekly Report

Houston Health Department,
Office of Surveillance and Public Health Preparedness,
Public Health Informatics
CDC MMWR Week 42, October 16 to 22, 2016

Summary

The Houston Health Department (HHD) conducts seasonal influenza surveillance from October (week 40) 2016 to May (week 22) 2017. Flu activity typically peaks between December and February. Flu vaccine is recommended for individuals that are 6 months and older.

Influenza activity in Houston is low and increasing.

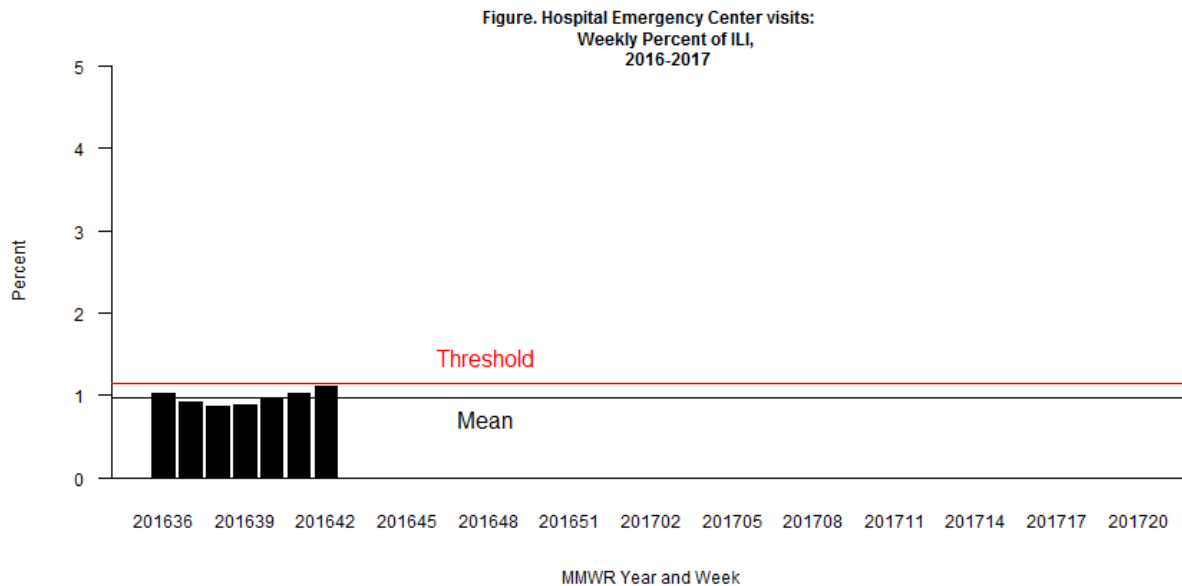
Influenza Like Illness (ILI)

Influenza Like Illness (ILI) is monitored with several data sources. A description of each surveillance activity can be found in the components section. Each of the following plots corresponds to a different surveillance system. ILI activity is reported in percents per week.

Table .Summary of ILI activity per week and surveillance activity

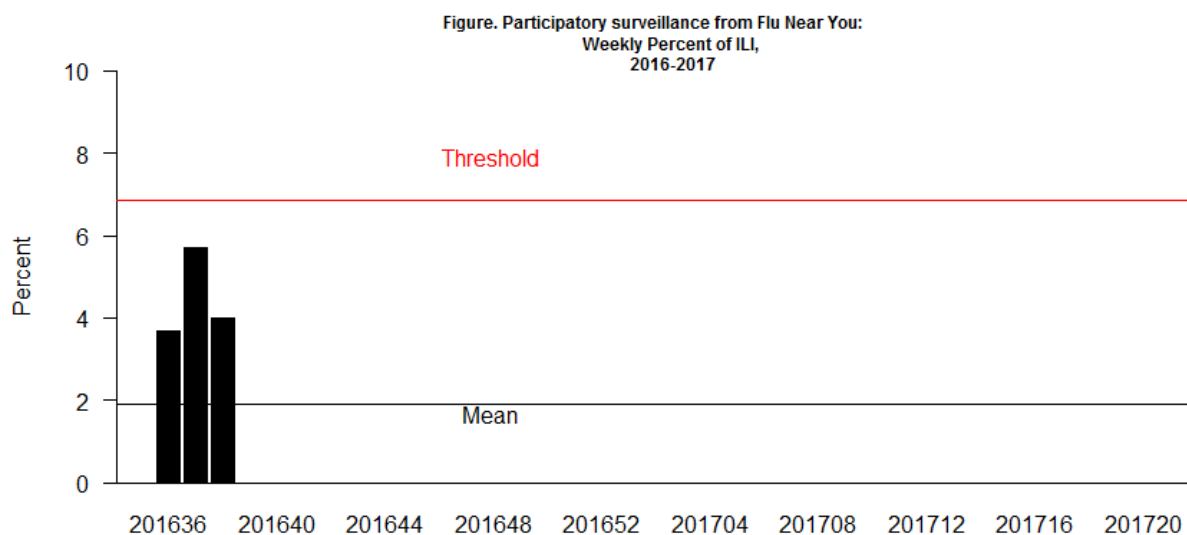
		Influenza Like Illness	
Date	MMWRYrWk	Hospital Emergency Center (% per week)	Flu Near You (% per week)
October 2 to 8, 2016	201640	1.0	0
October 9 to 15, 2016	201641	1.0	0
Ocotber 16 to 22, 2016	201642	1.1	0

Hospital emergency centers (EC) visits for ILI represent individuals whose symptoms were severe enough to warrant a visit to an EC. Hospitals transmit data to the syndromic surveillance system at the Houston Health Department on a real-time basis.



Outpatient visits for ILI represent individuals whose symptoms require a visit to a healthcare provider. ILI activity in outpatient settings is obtained on a weekly basis from ILINet and Athena. The announcements describes how healthcare providers can participate in ILInet.

Crowd sourced reports for ILI represent individuals who have symptoms for ILI ranging in severity and may or may not have accessed the healthcare system. This form of public health surveillance complements other surveillance for ILI activity in that it may provide information for earlier detection of increased ILI activity. Flu Near You platform provides data collected via participatory surveillance. See announcements to learn how to participate.



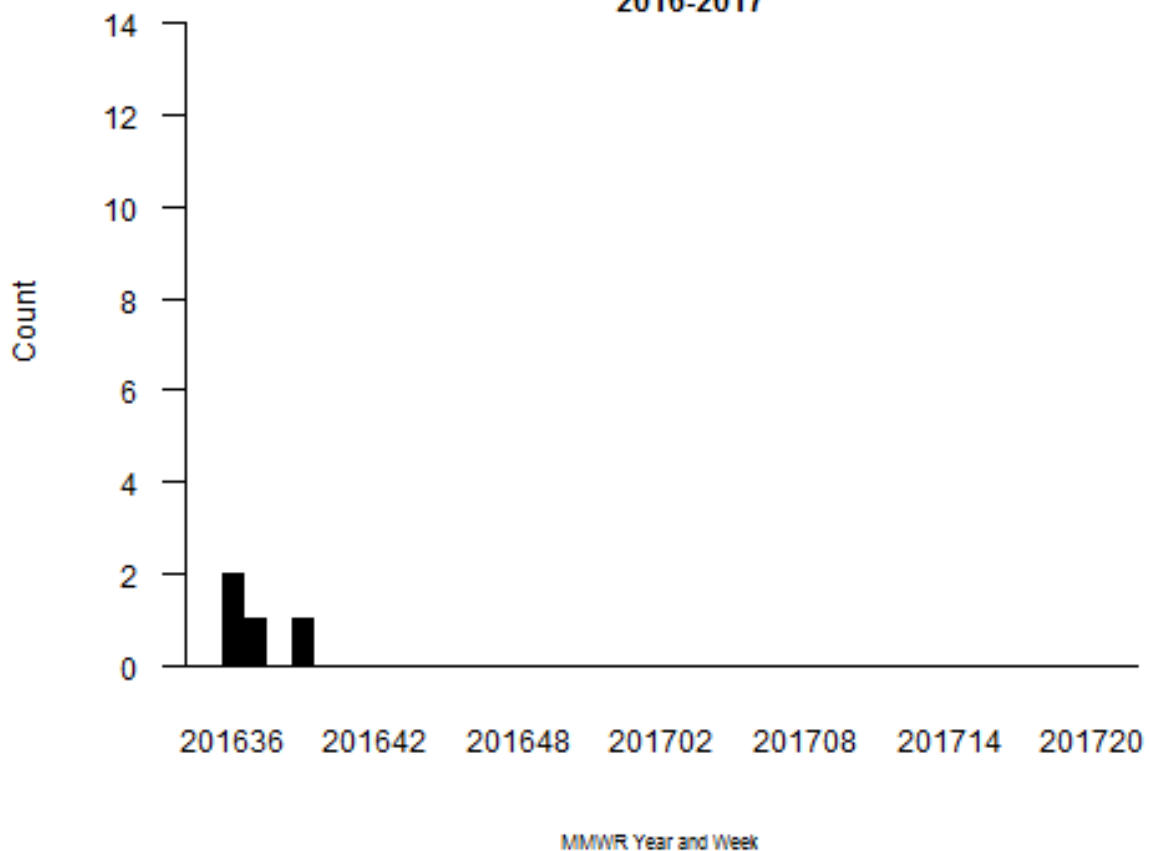
Flu activity in School settings

The Houston Independent School District collects data on student ILI and influenza cases from 306 schools. School will be counted more than once if more than one case from the same school is reported during the month.

Table .Summary of ILI activity per week in school settings

Date	Influenza Like Illness	
	MMWRYrWk	HISD (counts per week)
September 4 to 10, 2016	201636	2
September 11 to 17, 2016	201637	1
September 18 to 24, 2016	201638	0
September 25 to October 1, 2016	201639	1
October 2 to 8, 2016	201640	NA
October 9 to 15, 2016	201641	NA
Ocotber 16 to 22, 2016	201642	NA

**Figure. Flu activity in
Houston Independent School District:
Weekly Count of ILI,
2016-2017**



Influenza positive lab results

Test performed at the Houston Health Department

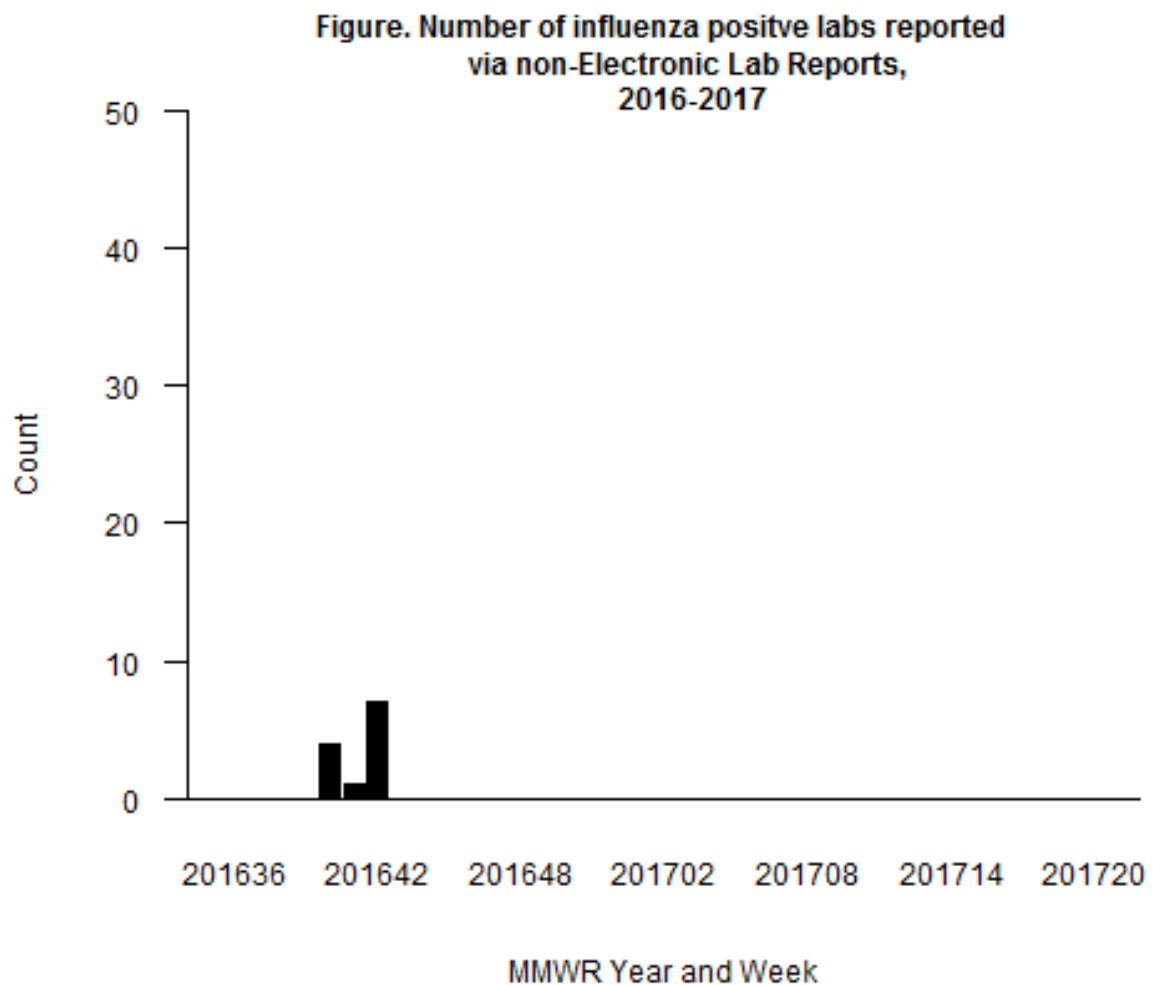
No tests performed at this time

Tests performed by clinical labs

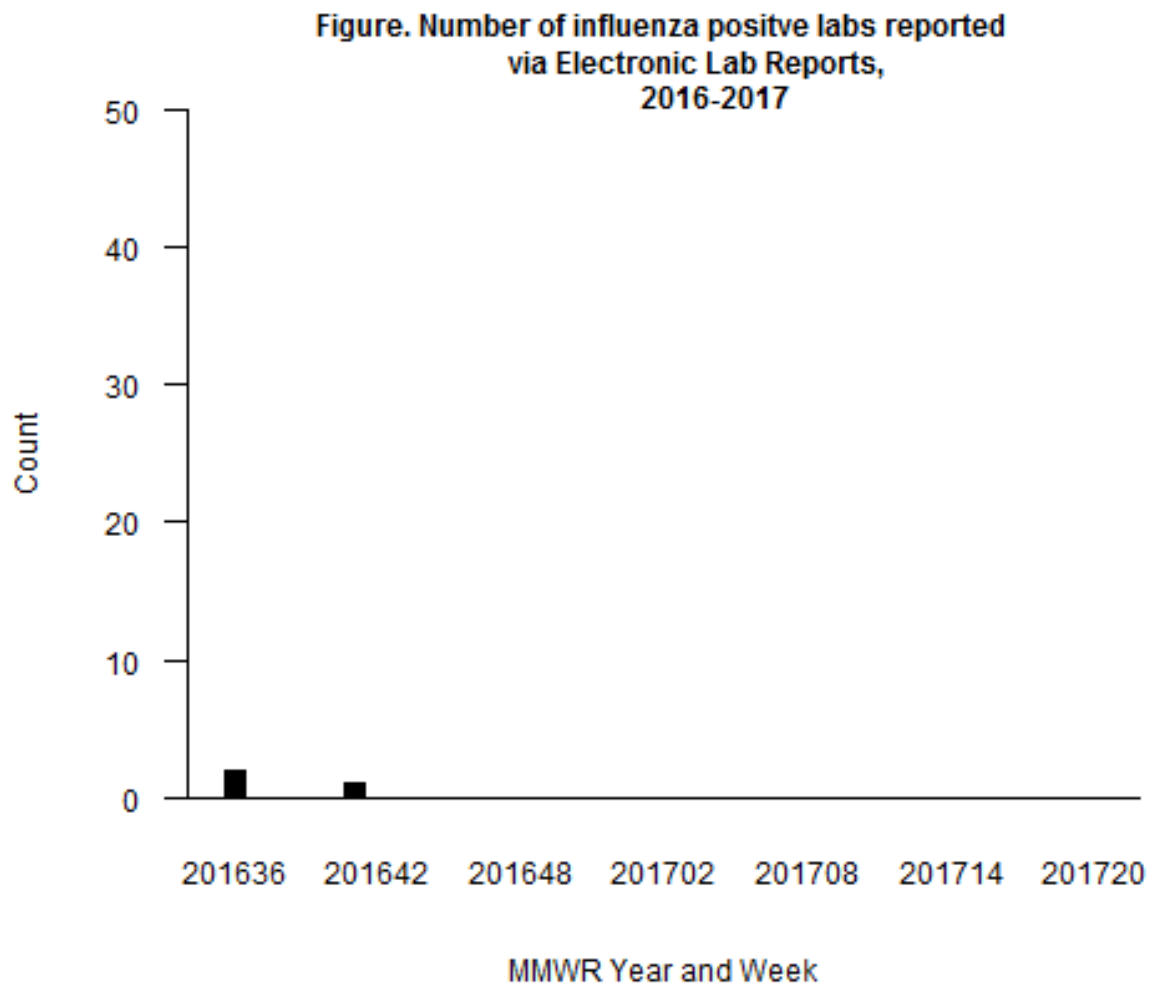
Table .Summary of influenza positives in clinical labs

		Influenza positives from clinical labs	
Date	MMWRYrWk	Electronic Lab Reports (Counts per week)	Non-Electronic Lab Reports (Counts per week)
October 2 to 8, 2016	201640	0	4
October 9 to 15, 2016	201641	1	1
October 16 to 22, 2016	201642	0	7

Non-electronic lab reports from clinical laboratories are reported to HHD.



Electronic lab reports from clinical laboratories are transmitted to HHD.



Prevention and Control

Note: For the 2016-2017 season, CDC recommends use of the flu shot (inactivated influenza vaccine or IIV) and the recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV). The nasal spray flu vaccine (live attenuated influenza vaccine or LAIV) should not be used during 2016-2017. The 2016-2017 influenza vaccination recommendations are now available.

- Get the Flu vaccine
- Wash you hands with soap and water
- Cover your cough or sneeze
- Stay home if ill
- Use antivirals if your doctor prescribes them

Additional information regarding Houston, Texas and national ILI activity can be accessed at: <http://www.houstontx.gov/health/>
<http://http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/influenza/surveillance/2015/>
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>
<http://www.who.int/csr/don/en/>

Announcements

Healthcare providers can become ILINet Providers. An ILINet provider conducts surveillance for influenza-like illness (ILI) in collaboration with the Texas Department of State Health Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Data reported by ILINet providers are combined with other surveillance data to provide a national picture of influenza virus and ILI activity in the U.S.

ILINet providers receive feedback on the data submitted, summaries of regional and national influenza data, and preliminary information via email and letters.

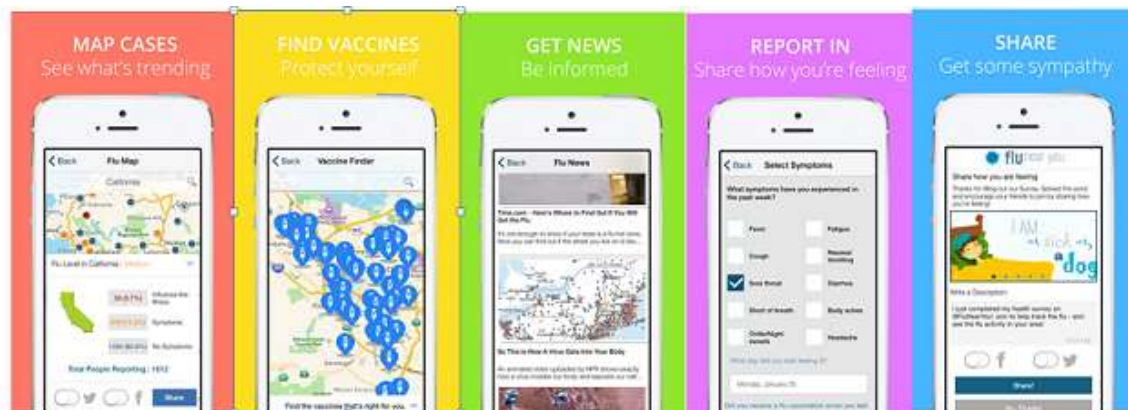
For more information about the ILINet Program visit

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/influenza/surveillance/ILINet/>

Flu Near You Flu Near You is a participatory surveillance (crowd sourcing) tool which complements traditional disease surveillance activities. Registered users can obtain real-time information on flu activity and influenza vaccines in the Greater Houston Metropolitan Area. Flu Near You features include:

- Report symptoms
- Find vaccines
- Map flu cases in the Greater Houston Metropolitan area
- Get flu news
- Share on social media

This season HHD invites you to register for Flu Near You at <https://flunearyou.org>



Components

Influenza Like Illness

Influenza Like Illness activity is monitored with four data sources. The data sources for ILI consist of hospital emergency center visits, outpatient visits, and Flu Near You.

Hospital Emergency Center (EC) visits which include symptoms for ILI are obtained from hospital participating in syndromic surveillance on a real-time basis. The Houston/Harris County ILI activity is tracked and monitored based on chief complaint data. The number of healthcare providers reporting ILI information to Houston Health Department ranges from 30 to 40. These data do not represent laboratory confirmed cases of influenza nor do they represent all EC visits in Houston/Harris County.

Outpatient visits due to ILI are obtained from Athena and ILInet on a weekly basis.

Crowd sourced reported are obtained from the Flu Near You platform on a weekly basis. Visit <https://flunearyou.org> to get information on what is participatory surveillance and how you can participate.

Contact information

The Houston Influenza Surveillance Weekly Report is available on the Houston Health Department web site at: <http://www.houstontx.gov/health/weekly-flu-report>

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